



# The Earth System Science Fellowship Guide\*

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\* This Guide is designed to **supplement** the document NASA Policies and Procedures for Administering Training Grants. (June 2000)

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## I. Accepting the Fellowship

### How to Formally Accept the Fellowship

In response to the letter offering you an Earth System Science (ESS) Fellowship, you need to send a signed letter of acceptance directly to:

Dr. Ming-Ying Wei  
ESS Fellowship Program Manager  
Code YO  
NASA Headquarters  
Washington, DC 20546

### Preparing Your Budget

Along with your letter of acceptance, you need to prepare and submit a budget, which is signed by both you and your advisor. As outlined in the NASA Policies and Procedures for Administering Training Grants you are allowed to spend \$19,000 for tuition, stipend, supplies, travel and other expenses related to your research. You may arrange this money in a way that best suits your needs. An additional \$3,000 is allowed for university expenses. This university allowance may also be used for tuition or research expenses, if agreed upon by your advisor; it may also support research-related travel for your advisor (i.e. to accompany you to a scientific meeting, oversee your research, etc.) or yourself.

Please note that you must have your advisor sign the budget. If your advisor is unavailable, then have your Department Chair sign in his/her absence.

### Coordination With Your University

It is important that you coordinate your acceptance of the NASA Earth System Science Fellowship with your University's Contracts and Grants Office or Office of Sponsored Research. The officials in these offices have the responsibility of administering your training grant throughout your fellowship. We recommend that you coordinate with your University before sending us any materials; **however, you should not miss the deadline for response.**

Your University Contracts and Grants Office will need to see the NASA letter offering you the fellowship, a copy of the document NASA Policies and Procedures for Administering Training Grants, and a copy of your research proposal, your letter of acceptance and budget. Sometimes the University Contracts and Grants Office prefers to endorse the acceptance letter and budget.

If, for some reason, your University Contracts and Grants Office has not endorsed your original application and provided an official signature under Block V ("Certification of

Compliance with Applicable Executive Orders and U.S. Code”) of your application form, please be sure to ask them to provide the following two items:

- 1) Certification of Compliance with the NASA Regulations Pursuant to Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs, and
- 2) Certifications, Disclosures, and Assurances Regarding Lobbying and Debarment & Suspension.

We prefer that all materials for the administration of your fellowship arrive in one package; **however, you should not miss the deadline for response.**

## II. Funding of the Fellowship

### Administering the Funds

The fellowship funds are administered through your University Grants and Contracts Office. Because each University administers training grants differently, we recommend that you check with your faculty advisor or your University Contracts and Grants Office to get the details about how they intend to administer the funds. The training grant is scheduled to start September 1, but sometimes funds do not arrive by that date. You may go to <http://genesis.gsfc.nasa.gov/grants/grants.htm> to check on the award status. Also, check with your University Contracts and Grants Office to see how they can help you if the funds do not arrive by September 1.

### Carry-over of Funds

As long as your fellowship is renewed for another year at the same University, the remaining funds from the previous year will automatically be carried over into the next year.

## III. Restrictions on the use of Fellowship Funds

Funds can be used for paying your tuition, fees, stipend, travel expenses, supplies (chemicals, glassware, etc.), copying costs, computing time, etc.; **however, you may not use NASA fellowship funds for the purchase of equipment.** Equipment is best defined as costly items for long term use (i.e., computers, printers, photocopiers, telephones, specialized lab or field instruments, etc.). When in doubt, **ask before purchasing!** The records of expenditures made using NASA training grant funds are subject to inspection and auditing during the grant period of performance and for 3 years thereafter.

## IV. Fellowship Renewal

The Earth System Science Fellowship is renewable for an additional two years pending satisfactory progress and availability of funds. The renewal procedure, similar to the new

application, is posted on our web. All renewal applications must be submitted by March 15 each year and must include three (3) copies of the following materials, including at least one (1) with original signatures.

1. A completed application form, including signatures of the applicant, the faculty advisor, and the institutional official
2. A progress report, describing work accomplished during the previous year and plans for the coming year
3. An updated schedule for completing your degree program
4. A completed budget form
5. A recommendation letter from the academic advisor
6. Recent transcripts

(Excerpt from <http://www.earth.nasa.gov/nra/index.html>)

## **V. Requesting International Travel**

If you need to travel to a meeting or perform research in a foreign country, you must have prior written approval for the trip regardless of its inclusion in your signed budget. Foreign travel must be approved by several offices at NASA before you depart, so please allow a minimum of 6 weeks for the processing of a request. To request international travel you need to send a letter to our ESS Fellowship Program Administrator (see addresses and phone numbers at the end of this guide) detailing where you plan to travel, the reason for your trip, and the trip's approximate length. Please include your NASA training grant number (NGT5 - #) in the letter and if possible get your advisor's signature. You should receive a letter of response within 6 weeks. If you need to check the status of your request, you may reach the NASA Grants Officer by phone at (301) 286-8511, or by FAX at (301) 286-6648. Please have your NASA training grant number (NGT5 - #) available when you call.

## **VI. Paying Taxes on the Fellowship**

Please refer to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Publication 520 titled "Scholarships and Fellowships" and Publication 508 titled "Educational Expenses" for information about paying taxes on the Earth System Science Fellowship. The IRS will mail you free copies of these publications if you call their toll free number at 1-800-829-3676.

## **VII. Changes in Grant Conditions**

NASA training grants are awarded to the University on your behalf; hence, any change in your advisor, the university at which you are registered, or your graduate student status is significant. Please read the following information carefully and understand that the fellowship is awarded to your University, and not to you personally.

### Changing Your Faculty Advisor

To change your faculty advisor, you must submit a letter to our ESS Fellowship Program Administrator outlining the circumstance. NASA also requires a letter of support from your intended new advisor as well as a letter from your current advisor expressing his/her support of the change.

The ESS Fellowship Program Manager or Administrator and the NASA Grants Officer will review your request and determine whether or not the change is acceptable; you will then receive a notification of their decision. A request to change advisors should be sent at least 6 weeks prior to the date when you intend to change advisors.

### Transferring to Another University

Transferring to another university is somewhat involved because the NASA Training Grant has been awarded to your “old” University on your behalf. In order to transfer to another University and still maintain your fellowship, you need to request permission to transfer 6 months before the beginning of the new funding cycle (September 1). You should not assume that you can simply transfer and that your fellowship funds will follow you to the “new” University. When requesting permission to transfer your fellowship to another University, you must submit the items listed below and then wait for your request to be considered.

- 1) A letter endorsed by both your current faculty advisor and the University, stating that they support your transfer to another University.
- 2) A letter from the “new” University which you want to transfer to, stating that you have been accepted as a PhD candidate.
- 3) A letter of support from the person you would like to serve as your faculty advisor at your “new” University.
- 4) A budget and necessary certifications from your “new” University.

Due to the complicated nature of a transfer, we recommend that you send materials at least 6 months in advance and then follow through by calling to see if our Fellowship Program Manager and Administrator have received all the materials necessary to make a decision.

### Leaving Your PhD Program

If you must leave your PhD program for some reason, please notify the ESS Fellowship Program Administrator in writing. Once you leave the PhD program, your fellowship is terminated at the end of that particular funding cycle (August 31).

If you leave before August 31 and there are still fellowship funds remaining, your faculty advisor can request that a PhD candidate pursuing similar research be allowed to use up the funds remaining in that given year. A letter from your advisor outlining the situation, naming the substitute student and confirming the substitute student's status as a PhD candidate pursuing similar research should be sent to the ESS Fellowship Program Administrator. The University Contracts and Grants Office should also endorse the request. If additional time is needed to spend the remaining funds (beyond August 31), a request for a no-cost extension should be included in the letter.

### Graduating

Upon graduation you and your advisor should send a letter to our Fellowship Program Administrator indicating the date on which you will receive your PhD. Your fellowship will end upon graduation. Please see section IX. Submitting the Final Report for additional requirements.

Please read the second paragraph under Leaving Your PhD Program because it also applies upon the completion of your degree.

## **VIII. Acknowledgement**

Please include the following acknowledgement in all publications resulting from your fellowship:

“This work was supported by NASA Headquarters under the Earth System Science Fellowship Grant **NGT5** - .”

## **IX. Submitting the Final Report**

You must submit a final administrative report upon completion of your research. This report should be submitted before the termination date of the grant. Information about the degree you have earned, your employment plans, your new address, a complete list as well as reprints of any publications resulting from the research and other pertinent information should be included in the report.

Your University should also submit a final Federal Cash Transactions Report on Standard Form 272.

A set of both reports should be sent to each of the following:

Ms. Anne N. Crouch  
ESS Fellowship Program Administrator  
Code YB  
NASA Headquarters  
Washington, DC 20546

NASA Grants Officer  
Code 210.G  
Goddard Space Flight Center  
Greenbelt, MD 20771

## **X. Points of Contact at NASA**

Your primary points of contact at NASA are:

Dr. Ming-Ying Wei  
ESS Fellowship Program Manager  
Code YO  
NASA Headquarters  
Washington, DC 20546  
Phone: (202) 358-0771  
Fax: (202) 358-2770  
Email: [mwei@hq.nasa.gov](mailto:mwei@hq.nasa.gov)

Ms. Anne N. Crouch  
ESS Fellowship Program Administrator  
Code YB  
NASA Headquarters  
Washington, DC 20546  
Phone: (202) 358-0855  
Fax: (202) 358-2891  
Email: [acrouch@hq.nasa.gov](mailto:acrouch@hq.nasa.gov)